			1218
1	UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT EASTERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK		
2	X		
3	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, :	19-CR-4(WFK)	
4	:		
5	: -against-	United States Courthouse	
6	:	Brooklyn, New York	
7	: RONELL WATSON, :	Wednesday, July 17, 2019	
8	: Defendant. :	9:30 a.m.	
9			
10	X		
11	TRANSCRIPT OF CRIMINAL CAUSE FOR TRIAL		
12	BEFORE THE HONORABLE WILLIAM F. KUNTZ, II UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT JUDGE		
13	APPEARANCES:		
14		TES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE	
15	EASTERN DI	STRICT OF NEW YORK man Plaza East	
16	Brookly	n, New York 11201 P. DONOGHUE,	
17	United	States Attorney CO NAVARRO,	
18		nt United States Attorney	
19	For the Defendant: FEDERAL DE	FENDERS OF NEW YORK	
20	1 Pierr	epont Plaza - 16th Floor n, New York 11201	
21	BY:MICHELĽ	E A. GELERNT, ESQ. P. PADDEN ESQ.	
22		N ZEV YASTER, ESQ.	
23	Court Papartor: DENISE DARIS	T NEETCIAL COURT REDORTER	)
24	. 225 Cadman P	I, OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER laza East/Brooklyn, NY 112 720gmail com	
25	DeniseParisi72@gmail.com Proceedings recorded by mechanical stenography, transcript produced by Computer-Aided Transcription.		

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1
               (Whereupon, commencing at 11:08 a.m., the following
 2
    further proceedings were had in open court, outside the
 3
    presence of the jury, to wit:)
 4
               THE COURT:
                           Would you call down again, Mr. Jackson,
    and see how much longer it's going to be?
5
6
               (Pause.)
7
               THE COURTROOM DEPUTY: They are on their way up,
8
    Judge, right now.
9
               THE COURT:
                           Thank you.
10
               (Pause.)
11
               MS. GELERNT: Your Honor, may we go in the back for
12
    a moment?
13
               THE COURT:
                           No.
                                Bring him out.
14
               (Defendant enters the courtroom at 11:13 a.m.)
15
               THE COURT: Please be seated, everyone.
                                                         Remain
16
    seated during the appearances.
17
               All right, Mr. Jackson, call the case and we'll take
18
    the appearances.
19
               THE COURT: Criminal cause for trial, Docket Number
20
    19-CR-4, USA versus Watson.
21
               Counsel, please state your appearances for the
22
    record.
23
              MR. DONOGHUE: For the United States, Richard
24
    Donoghue, R-I-C-H-A-R-D D-O-N-O-G-H-U-E, and Francisco
25
    Navarro, F-R-A-N-C-I-S-C-O N-A-V-A-R-R-O.
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Your Honor, I would also note that at the table we 1 2 have FBI Special Agent Shane Oravsky, S-H-A-N-E O-R-A-V-S-K-Y. 3 Good morning, Your Honor. 4 THE COURT: Good morning. For the defense? 5 MR. YASTER: Federal Defenders by Benjamin Yaster. 6 7 That's B-E-N-J-A-M-I-N Y-A-S-T-E-R, on behalf of Ronell 8 Watson, R-O-N-E-L-L W-A-T-S-O-N, who is seated to my left. 9 Good morning. 10 THE COURT: Good morning. 11 MS. GELERNT: Good morning, Your Honor. 12 Defenders by Michelle Gelernt, M-I-C-H-E-L-L-E, last name is 13 G-E-L-E-R-N-T. 14 MR. PADDEN: And also for the Federal Defenders, Your Honor, Michael Padden, M-I-C-H-A-E-L P-A-D-D-E-N. 15 morning. 16 17 THE COURT: Good morning. 18 The Court has received the following note: 19 Honorable Judge, We, the jury, have reached a verdict. We 20 would also like to inquire if the names of the jurors will be 21 made public and/or be public record, and, if so, if there is 22 an option for it not to be published publicly. Thank you. 23 Signed by the jury foreperson. 24 I have marked that as Exhibit 8.

(Court's Exhibit 8 so marked.)

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              THE COURT:
                          I have prepared a response, Exhibit 8-A,
 2
    which reads as follows: William F. Kuntz, II, United States
 3
    District Judge, in response to the jury's note, which has been
 4
    marked as Court Exhibit 8, the Court advises the jury the
    names of the jurors are not publicly available and will never
5
6
    be made public or publicly available. The names of the jurors
7
    are known only to the Court and the counsel of record.
8
    Court hereby orders all counsel of record and all parties to
9
    this action to maintain forever the confidentiality and the
10
    names of the jurors and it never to make the names of the
11
    jurors public or publicly available.
                                           So ordered.
    Honorable William F. Kuntz, II, United States District Court,
12
13
    July 17, 2019.
14
              Any objection to Court A -- the Court 8-A, being
    sent into the jury room?
15
16
              MR. DONOGHUE: Not from the Government, Your Honor.
17
              THE COURT: Any objection from the Federal Defenders
18
    to Court 8-A being sent into the jury room?
19
              MS. GELERNT:
                            Your Honor, if we may just have a
20
    moment?
21
              THE COURT:
                          We have copies of the document for both
22
    sides to see. You can give them Court 8 and Court 8-A.
23
               (Pause.)
24
              MS. GELERNT: Your Honor, we have no objection.
25
               (Court's Exhibit 8-A so marked.)
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All right. Would you please give Court 1 THE COURT: 2 8-A to the Court security officer to be taken in to the jury, 3 please? And then come right back. 4 (Pause.) (Court's Exhibit 2-A so marked.) 5 THE COURT: The Court has also received from the 6 7 court security officer the following document: Court 8 Exhibit 2-A, verdict reached, which reads as follows: Judge 9 Kuntz, We, the jury, have reached a unanimous verdict. The 10 foreperson of the jury has signed that verdict sheet and will bring that verdict sheet with him or her into the courtroom 11 12 marked as Court Exhibit 3-A to be announced in court when we 13 are brought back to the court by the court security officer. 14 The foreperson has signed and dated the form. 15 Should I bring the jury in, Government? 16 MR. DONOGHUE: Yes, sir. 17 THE COURT: Defense counsel? 18 MS. GELERNT: Yes, Your Honor. 19 THE COURT: All right. 20 Would you please, Michael, tell the court security 21 officer that he should bring in the jury, and he can give the 22 lawyers copies of Court 2-A. 23 MS. GELERNT: Your Honor, do you want Mr. Watson to 24 stand or sit --

THE COURT:

Sit.

1	MS. GELERNT: Okay.
2	THE COURT: I want everybody to remain seated when
3	the jury comes in, and I want everybody to have their cell
4	phones stored, as they say in the airline business.
5	(Pause.)
6	THE MARSHAL: All rise.
7	(Jury enters.)
8	(Court's Exhibit 3-A so marked.)
9	THE COURT: Welcome back, ladies and gentlemen of
10	the jury. I understand you have reached a verdict. I'm going
11	to ask the foreperson of the jury to read the verdict out
12	loud.
13	Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, you may be seated.
14	Foreperson, I would like you to stand, keep your
15	voice up, and read the verdict out loud.
16	Counsel, everyone, please sit down.
17	Go ahead.
18	JURY FOREPERSON: We, the jury, in the
19	above-captioned case hereby render the following verdict:
20	Ronell Watson.
21	Count One: Attempted murder of a federal officer.
22	Guilty.
23	Count Two: Assault of a federal officer.
24	Guilty.
25	Did the defendant use a deadly or dangerous weapon

1	to commit the assault?		
2	Yes.		
3	Did the defendant inflict bodily injury?		
4	Yes.		
5	Count Three: Using and possessing a firearm during		
6	and in relation to a crime of violence.		
7	Guilty.		
8	Did the defendant use, carry, or possess a firearm		
9	in connection with the underlying crime charged in Count One?		
10	Yes.		
11	If yes, did the defendant discharge the firearm in		
12	relation to the underlying crime charged in Count One?		
13	Yes.		
14	Did the defendant use, carry, or possess a firearm		
15	in connection with the underlying crime charged in Count Two?		
16	Yes.		
17	If yes, did the defendant discharge a firearm in		
18	relation to the		
19	THE COURT: Keep going.		
20	JURY FOREPERSON: Yes.		
21	If yes, did the defendant discharge a firearm in		
22	relation to the underlying crime charged in Count Two?		
23	Yes.		
24	THE COURT: Thank you. Will you please hand me		
25	sir, thank you very much, appreciate it the verdict sheet,		

counts?

1 JUROR NO. 8: Yes.

THE COURT: Juror No. 9, is this your verdict on all counts?

JUROR NO. 9: Yes.

THE COURT: Juror No. 10, is this your verdict on all counts?

JUROR NO. 10: Yes.

THE COURT: Juror No. 11, is this your verdict on all counts?

JUROR NO. 11: Yes.

THE COURT: Juror No. 12, is this your verdict on all counts?

JUROR NO. 12: Yes.

THE COURT: Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, I want to thank you and all the parties to this action and all the counsel to this action and the court staff and the public and this great republic of ours, I want to thank you for your duty and your service. I know this was difficult; I know this was hard. I practiced law in New York for 33 years before becoming a judge eight years ago. I know this tears at many of you, not only because I saw the diligence with which you followed this case, but I can see it in your faces, in your eyes, in your body postures. I know how dedicated you are to the rule of law. I know how hard this is, and I want you to know that I know how hard this is and how hard this has been

for all of you.

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I cannot thank you enough on behalf of the people of the United States, on behalf of our citizens, on behalf of the rule of law. It is magnificent, but it is imperfect, but you know, having gone through this, that justice was done here, because you battled to get to the truth and to render a true and just verdict. As I told you in the beginning, this would be a hard but important task for each of you. I know that the lawyers, if given the opportunity, would thank you individually and collectively for your fine work, and I want to give a particular acknowledgment and a particular shout-out to the alternates who also served who sat and waited. think that you were not appreciated, that you were not acknowledged every bit as much as the 12 who are closer to me right now, but none of you is far from my heart and the heart and soul of all of the participants. This is what our justice system is, ladies and gentlemen. It is hard, it is focused, but you have done it.

I want to thank you, I want to say God bless you, each and every one of you. You are discharged now with the thanks of the Court. You will return to the second floor jury room and you will be guided by the knowledge that you have advanced the cause of equal justice under law. You leave with my thanks and my appreciation and, truly, my humble gratitude to you. God bless you and keep you.

1 We're adjourned. Thank you. 2 (Jury exits.) 3 THE COURT: Thank you, you may be seated. 4 And, ladies and gentlemen, you who are the alternates, you are also excused now, thank you, back down to 5 the second floor, with the thanks of the Court and all of my 6 7 appreciation for your service as well. 8 (Alternate jurors exit the courtroom.) 9 THE COURT: All right. The jurors and the 10 alternates have left the courtroom. 11 Do we have any motions or any procedural issues to In a few minutes, I will have copies made of the 12 address? 13 verdict sheet that's been signed by the jury foreperson, sheet 14 3-A, and I will make them available to all counsel of record, so I will ask everyone to sit tight after we have whatever 15 16 motions we have. 17 Any motions? 18 MR. DONOGHUE: Not from the Government, Your Honor. 19 THE COURT: Any motions? 20 MS. GELERNT: Your Honor, we would ask for 21 additional time to file our motions in writing. 22 THE COURT: How much? 23 MS. GELERNT: I guess the statute allows for two 24 weeks. If we could have four weeks, Your Honor. 25 THE COURT: Granted, four weeks. So let's get a

Thank you.

24

25

have it.

MR. DONOGHUE:

MR. DONOGHUE: No, sir.

THE COURT: Anything else?

24

1 MS. GELERNT: No, Your Honor. 2 THE COURT: Okay. Why don't you sit tight, 3 everyone, and we will get copies of the signed verdict sheet 4 to counsel, okay? Again, mindful of the requirement that the names of the members of the jury are forever to be maintained 5 nonpublic. 6 0kay? 7 MR. DONOGHUE: Your Honor, on that point, I would note that the jury foreman signed each of the notes that came 8 9 from the jury. I assume the Court's going to have a redacted 10 version that is part of the record. 11 THE COURT: Your assumption is well-founded --12 Thank you, sir. MR. DONOGHUE: 13 THE COURT: -- because that is exactly what we are 14 going to do. 15 MR. DONOGHUE: Thank you. 16 THE COURT: You're very welcome. 17 Anything else? 18 MR. DONOGHUE: No, sir. 19 MS. GELERNT: Your Honor, I guess just along those 20 lines, the original jury selection, I don't believe was 21 sealed. 22 Well, it's sealed now. And its sealing THE COURT: 23 applies both to the lawyers and to the parties, and I assure 24 there's not going to be a problem, because if there's a

problem, there's going to be a problem; are we clear on that?

MS. GELERNT: That's understood completely, Your Honor.

THE COURT: Good.

MS. GELERNT: It's just that they were already produced, and I just wanted to make sure it was sealed on the record and the docket itself.

THE COURT: Okay, we'll seal it for the record, and I appreciate you calling that to the attention of the Court and of all members of the public and of all counsel, because it will be a very bad hair day should those names get out, very bad, very bad.

Anything else?

MR. DONOGHUE: Not from the Government, Your Honor.

MS. GELERNT: No, Your Honor.

THE COURT: Okay.

Michael, would you be good enough to make -- I think we should start the redaction process now with respect to the jury foreperson's name. You can just, in the photocopying process, just block out the jury foreperson's name on the copies that will be provided to Counsel so there's no accident so we don't have any problems. In fact, I will probably -- again, that's just a copy, we are going to have the original with the name, because it's important to have the original on -- handled. Okay?

THE CLERK: Got it.

1	THE COURT: Thank you.	
2	THE CLERK: Thank you, Judge.	
3	THE COURT: I move very slowly. You can remain	
4	seated. Relax. Just take your time.	
5	THE CLERK: Thank you, Judge.	
6	(Pause.)	
7	THE COURT: May I have the original, please?	
8	THE CLERK: Yes.	
9	THE COURT: Let's go back on the record.	
10	I have what has been marked as Court Exhibit 3-A,	
11	the verdict sheet, and we've redacted the signature of the	
12	jury foreperson on the copies that will now be provided to	
13	counsel, but we do have copies for counsel of the verdict	
14	sheet as announced in court, and I've polled the jury, of	
15	course.	
16	How many copies would each side like of Court 3-A?	
17	For the Government, how many copies do you want?	
18	MR. DONOGHUE: Two, if you have them, Your Honor.	
19	THE COURT: We have them.	
20	Defense counsel, how many copies would you like?	
21	MS. GELERNT: I suppose, if you have them, three,	
22	we'll take them, but	
23	THE COURT: We have three, Counsel. We are very	
24	generous with the copies of such a just verdict, and we have a	
25	copy for the court reporter as well.	

And before we adjourn, I want to say this to counsel

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Madam Reporter (handing).

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This is the first time I've had the pleasure of having the lawyers who tried this case try a case before me. I've interacted with you in other capacities; this is the first time we've had a trial. This experience has convinced me of the wisdom of my decision to become an Article III judge because I couldn't match your skill and your vigor as advocates, and I'm glad I never had to try a case against any of these guys. You tried the case incredibly well, with incredible discipline and professionalism, and I know there's a lot of passion on both sides of this case, and one of the things that I find impressive about our profession as lawyers and judges is the skill and the competence, as you juggled your many competing duties, that each of you has both personally and professionally to try a case like this.

I bored you in some of the pretrial proceedings we had with war stories, I will now bore you with another one, and then I will discharge you with the thanks of the Court and my acknowledgment.

We had a case here, a number of years ago now, where defendant ultimately pled guilty in the case to the murder overseas of one of our American diplomats, and one of the people who survived that attack was his best friend who was a United States Marine attache, and after the trial was over,

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the survivor of the attack and the family of the gentleman who had been killed asked if they could come to chambers to express their appreciation of the proceedings -- it hadn't gone to a full trial, there had been a plea, but there had been a number of pretrial proceedings and so forth -- and I checked with the other side, they didn't have any problem with that, the case was over, and I said sure. And the family was very grateful. I said, I just did the best I could as a trial judge, and I said to the marine who had survived the attack, I said, I have a question for you. And he said, What's your question, Judge? I said, Well, you were in country, you were with your best friend, you saw him murdered. You, yourself, were almost killed, you were shot up pretty badly, you've just gone through several weeks, months -- actually years leading up to the proceedings, but many weeks of pretrial proceedings -- what do you think of that? You're a soldier. What do you think of what you've been through in this judicial part of it? And this marine looked at me -- this man had been shot, almost killed -- and he said, Judge, that's what I'm fighting for. I'm fighting for the right of that defendant who killed my best friend overseas and who almost killed me, I'm fighting for his right to have fair and impartial proceedings before you or another federal judge. He said, that's what I put my life on the line for. He said, I don't ever want to be a soldier in a country where when you catch

the guy who killed your best friend, when you catch the guy who almost killed you, you say, up against the wall, and you shoot him. He says, when you are in a war and you are fighting soldiers, that's one thing, but when that man was captured and he had every single protection that the American judicial system provides, he says, that's why I put my life on the line.

I never wanted to kiss a male Marine more in my life, I resisted the urge, but what I really wanted to do was to bottle his heroism and his true patriotism, and I see that spirit reflected in this courthouse, and I saw it reflected in this courtroom in this trial, and I cannot be more grateful to you, Counsel, on both sides, and I cannot be more convinced of the wisdom that I had in getting the hell out of the trenches and putting on the black prom dress to be a judge.

So with that, you are discharged with the thanks of the Court. I look forward to your post-trial submissions and I look forward to having you appear before me again, but give me a couple days off.

Thank you. We're adjourned.

MR. DONOGHUE: Thank you, Your Honor.

MR. NAVARRO: Thank you, Your Honor.

MS. GELERNT: Thank you.

THE COURT: Thank you, everyone. God bless.

(Matter adjourned.)

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